

Child Care WAGE\$® Project Delaware Overview

What is Child Care WAGE\$®? WAGE\$® helps to provide education-based salary supplements to under paid teachers, directors, administrators and family child care providers, working with children birth thru five. The participant must be working in a regulated (STARS) early care and education setting. The program must be a STAR 3 or higher. The initiative is designed to increase workforce retention, education and compensation. The WAGES\$® participant receives a supplement every six (6) months tied to the level of education and retention in their program.

Why is WAGE\$® needed? Research shows that educated, compensated and stable teachers are crucial for the successful growth and development of young children. *“WAGE\$® is an evidence-informed model that advances the education level of early educators, increases their compensation levels and results in the retention of a qualified early care and education workforce”* (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center).

The goals of the Child Care WAGE\$® Project are to;

- Increase the educational level of early child care providers;
- Improve the quality of early care and education in child care centers and family child care programs;
- Increase the compensation of child care providers/early education staff without increasing the costs for parents; and
- Decrease the turnover rate of child care providers and early education staff.

How does WAGE\$® work? The Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children (DAEYC) will implement the licensed, evidence-informed model. Applications must be submitted to DAEYC for verification and after the six-month commitment period, the applicant will receive their supplement. Funding for the WAGE\$ Project Delaware will be provided by the Delaware Office of Early Learning. Supplements are provided in accordance to our funding. Be advised that a waiting list can occur. If this happens, supplements are distributed based on the date applications are received and verified.

Why an Investment in WAGE\$® helps? Education, compensation and retention are paramount for the better education and development of Delaware's young children. The education level within the field of early education has been low in the past. WAGE\$® offers supplements that increase as education increases, which provides an incentive to pursue additional coursework. The early childhood field has struggled with high turnover among their staff, mainly due to low compensation. WAGE\$®, partnered with T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Delaware, helps to increase compensation and education which makes a career in early childhood look more favorable. Studies have shown that if an educator is provided help to increase their education and compensation, they are more likely to stay retained at the program. Stability in early childhood helps children to thrive and successfully prepare for Kindergarten and beyond.

For questions, please contact Tamira Holloway, WAGE\$® Coordinator, tmholloway@daeyc.org